



30 August 20

## **Statement from the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs on New Minimum Wage and Labour Mobility Law**

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In furtherance of Qatar's efforts to protect the interests of employers and employees alike, the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (ADLSA) has today taken a major step forward in its labour reform programme, introducing a non-discriminatory minimum wage and removing the No-Objection Certificate requirement to change jobs for employees.

According to, Law No. 17 of 2020 on Setting the Minimum Wage for Workers and Domestic Workers sets the minimum wage for all private sector workers, including domestic workers, at QAR 1,000 per month as a basic wage, as well as QAR 500 per month allocated by the employer for accommodation expenses and QAR 300 per month for food, unless the employer already provides adequate food or accommodation for the employee or domestic worker.

ADLSA will be working with employers to update all employment contracts where workers earn less than the amount established by the new Law, which will come into force after 6 months of its publication in the official gazette.

The minimum wage was decided following extensive consultations with a specialised national committee composed of relevant authorities in Qatar to consider the matter. The law is the first of its kind in the Middle East and will provide additional stability to Qatar's labour market.

In light of the above, a Minimum Wage Committee will be formed and tasked with frequently studying and reviewing the minimum wage of workers and domestic workers.

The government also introduced Decree Law No. 18 of 2020 amending some provisions of Labour Law No. 14 of 2004 and Decree Law No. 19 of 2020 amending some provisions of 2004 Law No. 21 of 2015 regulating the entry and exit of expatriates and their residence, which protects the rights of both employers and employees and facilitates the employer change process. This will drive greater competition in Qatar's labour market by allowing employees to change employers and allowing employers to attract the best talent on the local market.

As part of our efforts to boost the effectiveness of the Wage Protection System, the new amendments to the Labour Law prescribe stricter penalties for employers who fail to pay their workers' wages and introduce penalties for employers who fail to provide adequate accommodation for their workers, in line with the standards established by the Ministry.

The new amendments also include increasing the number of labour dispute resolution committees in an effort to tackle the number of labour disputes, facilitate workers' access to the rights, and expedite legal proceedings.

**HE Yousuf Mohamed Al Othman Fakhroo, Minister of Administrative Development, Labour & Social Affairs, said:**



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Government Communications Office

30 August 20

*“The State of Qatar is committed to creating a modern and dynamic labour market. In line with Qatar Vision 2030, these new laws mark a major milestone in this journey and will benefit workers, employers, and the nation alike.”*

Attracting the desired combination of migrant workers, protecting their rights, and ensuring their safety is part of the human development goals of Qatar’s 2030 National Vision. With today’s announcement, Qatar delivers on its promise to expand the labour market in a manner that drives competition, boosts investment in the local economy, and drives economic growth in Qatar.

To ensure compliance with the changes, ADLSA is working with competent authorities to upgrade the Wage Protection System, strengthen the capacity of inspectors, and apply stricter penalties to companies that violate the law.

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## مكتب الإتصال الحكومي

Government Communications Office

30 August 20

### بيان وزارة التنمية الإدارية والعمل والشؤون الاجتماعية حول تحديد الحد الأدنى للأجور وتسهيل الانتقال بين جهات العمل المختلفة

استكمالاً لجهود دولة قطر في حماية حقوق كل من أصحاب العمل والعاملين لديهم على حد سواء، أعلنت وزارة التنمية الإدارية والعمل والشؤون الاجتماعية اليوم عن خطوة إيجابية هامة في برنامج إصلاحات سوق العمل، إذ تم بموجبه تحديد حد أدنى للأجور وتسهيل الانتقال بين جهات العمل المختلفة.

حيث تم إصدار القانون رقم (17) لسنة 2020 بشأن تحديد الحد الأدنى للأجور العمال والمستخدمين في المنازل، وقالت الوزارة أن تحديد الحد الأدنى لأجور العمال والمستخدمين في المنازل بمبلغ وقدره ١٠٠٠ ريال قطري شهرياً. وفي حال عدم توفير صاحب العمل السكن الملائم أو الغذاء للعامل أو المستخدم، يكون الحد الأدنى لسكن ٥٠٠ ريال قطري، والحد الأدنى لبدل الغذاء ٣٠٠ ريال.

وأكدت وزارة التنمية الإدارية والعمل والشؤون الاجتماعية على أنه سيتم التنسيق مع أصحاب العمل لتعديل عقود العمل التي يقل أجر العامل فيها عن الحد الأدنى المحدد في القرار الوزاري والمقرر العمل به بعد ٦ أشهر من تاريخ نشره في الجريدة الرسمية.

وتنوه الوزارة الى انه تم تحديد الحد الأدنى للأجور بعد مشاورات مكثفة أجريت مع لجنة وطنية مختصة مكونه من الجهات المعنية بالدولة لدراسة الموضوع، ليضيف هذا القرار، الذي يعتبر الأول من نوعه في منطقة الشرق الأوسط، مزيداً من الاستقرار لسوق العمل في دولة قطر.

وبناء على ما تقدم، سيتم تشكيل لجنة الحد الأدنى للأجور تختص بدراسة ومراجعة الحد الأدنى للأجور العمال والمستخدمين.

كما تم إصدار مرسوم بقانون رقم (١٨) لسنة ٢٠٢٠ بتعديل بعض أحكام قانون العمل الصادر بالقانون رقم (١٤) لسنة ٢٠٠٤، بالإضافة إلى إصدار مرسوم بقانون رقم (١٩) لسنة ٢٠٢٠ بتعديل بعض أحكام القانون رقم (٢١) (لسنة ٢٠١٥ بتنظيم دخول وخروج الوافدين وإقامتهم، واللذان يهدفان للحفاظ على حقوق كل من أصحاب العمل والعاملين لديهم. والذي بموجبه تم تسهيل الانتقال بين جهات العمل، الأمر الذي سيزيد من المنافسة والذي يتيح للعامل فرصة تغيير جهة عمله، وسيفيد صاحب العمل من خلال الحصول على العمالة الماهرة داخل السوق المحلي.

كما تتضمن التعديلات على قانون العمل تشديد العقوبات على أصحاب العمل الغير ملتزمين بسداد مستحقات العمال المالية، وذلك تعزيراً لفعالية نظام حماية الأجور، وكذلك وضع عقوبة يتم تطبيقها على أصحاب العمل المخالفين لالتزامهم بتوفير السكن الملائم للعمال ضمن المعايير التي وضعتها الوزارة.

وقد شملت التعديلات الجديدة زيادة عدد لجان فض المنازعات العمالية، وهي خطوة تم اتخاذها لمواجهة الزيادة في عدد المنازعات العمالية، والحرص على تيسير حصول العمال على حقوقهم وتسريع إجراءات التقاضي.

وقال سعادة السيد يوسف بن محمد العثمان فخرو، وزير التنمية الإدارية والعمل والشؤون الاجتماعية:

"إنّ دولة قطر ملتزمة ببناء سوق عمل يتسم بالحدثة والديناميكية. وتماشياً مع رؤية قطر الوطنية ٢٠٣٠، وتعد هذه القوانين خطوة جديدة وهامة في مسيرة الإصلاحات التي أجريناها على سوق العمل، ومن شأنهما أن تعود بالفائدة على أصحاب العمل والعمال والدولة على حدّ سواء"



# مكتب الإتصال الحكومي

Government Communications Office

30 August 20

كما تؤكد الوزارة أن استقطاب الكفاءات والمهارات من العمالة الوافدة ورعاية حقوقها وتأمين سلامتها يعد جزءاً من أهداف التنمية البشرية في رؤية قطر الوطنية 2030، كما يجسد الإعلان الصادر اليوم التزام دولة قطر بتعزيز آفاق سوق العمل على نحو يزيد من المنافسة، ويجذب الاستثمارات إليها، ويحفز النمو الاقتصادي في الدولة.

ولضمان الامتثال للتغييرات التي تم إصدارها، تعمل وزارة التنمية الإدارية والعمل والشؤون الاجتماعية مع مختلف الجهات المعنية على تحديث نظام حماية الأجور، وتعزيز قدرات المفتشين التابعين للوزارة، وتطبيق عقوبات أكثر صرامة بحق الشركات المخالفة.

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## Background information: Minimum Wage and removal of No-Objection Certificates in Qatar

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The Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (ADLSA) is announcing new decisions related to the labour system in Qatar.

These include a non-discriminatory minimum wage to apply to all employees and domestic workers in Qatar and the removal of No-Objection Certificates.

The new standards are aligned with the human and economic development goals of Qatar's 2030 National Vision. The standards will attract talented and ambitious workers from overseas, protect their rights and ensure their safety.

### How is the new minimum wage beneficial to workers?

- The new minimum wage sets a country-wide basic wage for all workers. It will provide stability to our labour market and provide a financial guarantee to all workers.
- For many workers, it provides them with more disposable income at the end of each month to either save or spend in Qatar or remit to their home countries. As a result of the new minimum wage, we expect millions of additional dollars to be remitted overseas in local currencies or re-invested in Qatar's economy each year.
- The minimum wage is significantly higher than the equivalent rate in the home countries of Qatar's largest expat populations:
  - Qatar – 1,800 QAR a month<sup>1</sup>
  - Bangladesh - 345 QAR a month<sup>2</sup>
  - Pakistan – 380 QAR per month<sup>3</sup>
  - Philippines – 375 QAR per month<sup>4</sup>
  - India – 8.75 QAR per day<sup>5</sup>
- The new law ensures workers are provided with adequate food and accommodation throughout their employment. If food and accommodation expenses are not paid for directly by their employer under the provisions of the contract, the employer is required to allocate a portion of the wage to cover these expenses. The employee or domestic worker will be paid:
  - QAR 500 per month for accommodation
  - QAR 300 per month for food

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<sup>1</sup> Includes QAR 500 per month for accommodation and QAR 300 per month for Food

<sup>2</sup> <https://sus-a.com/index.php/new-bangladesh-minimum-wage/2018/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://efp.org.pk/minimum-wage-notification-2019-labour-dept-gos/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://filipinotimes.net/news/2019/12/24/dh-employers-manila-told-minimum-wage-p5000-starting-january-2-2020/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://news.trust.org/item/20190802170845-5q2uq/>



30 August 20

### **Without No-Objection Certificates, what is the process for terminating a contract?**

- The No-Objection Certificate requirement to change jobs for employees has been eliminated.
- This will come into effect immediately upon its publication in the Official Gazette.
- Employees and employers will be able to terminate contracts, whether fixed-term or open-ended, subject to a minimum notice period
- Either party must provide one month written notice in the first two years of the contract or two months' notice beyond the second year of the contract.
- If the contract is terminated without appropriate notice, the party terminating is obligated to pay the other party a compensation equal to the basic wage of the employee for the notice period.

### **What is the significance of these measures in the region?**

- No other country in the region provides a non-discriminatory minimum wage for workers. This reform is the first of its kind in the Middle East.
- The law is non-discriminatory. Every worker receives a minimum wage regardless of nationality, industry or job. Minimum wages that have been implemented in other parts of the Middle East only apply to certain nationalities.
- The removal of the No-Objection Certificate requirement will increase the mobility of talent within Qatar and give workers the freedom to change jobs. This severs the contractual ties to their employer and will lead to increased job satisfaction.

### **What does non-discriminatory wage mean?**

- The non-discriminatory minimum wage of QAR 1,800 applies to workers in Qatar's private sector, regardless of job roles and nationalities.

### **How will it be enforced?**

- Qatar's State Cabinet has passed a draft law to increase the financial and non-financial penalties for companies violating labour laws, including in cases of delayed salary payments.
- ADLSA will be working with employers to update their employment contracts and ensure they are in line with the new legislation within the next six months.
- A Minimum Wage Committee will be formed and tasked with frequently studying and reviewing the minimum wage of employees and domestic workers.
- If a company currently has employees on its payroll system who earn less than the amount set out above, this must be amended in accordance with the new minimum wage. If the payroll system contains wages that are above these amounts, employers must not breach the terms of the contract by lowering the wages.
- We are educating workers to make sure they understand their rights and know how to access the help available to enforce those rights.

### **How will this create more competition and innovation in Qatar?**



مَكْتَبُ الْإِتِّصَالِ الْحُكُومِيِّ

Government Communications Office

30 August 20

- The new laws are setting a new standard for the region and make Qatar a more attractive destination for talented and skilled workers.
- These decisions will drive greater competition in Qatar's labour market, pushing employers to attract and retain the best talent who will support Qatar's transition to a diversified economy.
- A diversified economy will attract further investment in the local economy and nurture an innovative environment.
- The new decisions add to an already dynamic labour market where employees are able to gain new skills.